

Dear Transportation Committee:

Please do not re-instate tolls on Connecticut roads. They are a terrible idea because:

1. They unfairly tax residents more who happen to live near collection points.
2. They are a regressive means of taxation, penalizing those with lower incomes disproportionately.
3. They cause congestion, additional fuel consumption, interrupt snow plowing, and are known causes of accidents.
4. They discourage tourism or casual travel, which will negatively affect businesses near tolls.
5. Tolls steal time from commuters. If you take a few minutes from each person, that represents thousands of annual lost hours of citizen's lives, and for what? So that the state can extract additional tax dollars? So, tolls are a double whammy. Tolls extract money and steal parts of peoples lives.
6. Introducing tolls will establish another huge state bureaucracy needed to support the toll collection effort, the billings, and the enforcement of the collections.
7. Toll takers will require benefits, including pensions, sick leave. Commissioners, management and unions will need to be paid for. The physical toll stations will have to be designed, bid, constructed, maintained, electrified, heated, cooled and guarded. All of these expenses will be millions of dollars of deductions from the monies that will be extracted from the public, which means that actual the "efficiency" of the taxation method is far lower than other methods of taxation.
8. If you want to raise more revenue, and do so in a way that relates to travel, **increase the gas tax**. Although universally hated by politicians, gas taxes do a lot of good things. They effectively shift the tax burden toward those with less efficient vehicles, thereby encouraging a reduction in driving and the promotion of fuel-efficient technologies. Gas taxes would distribute the tax burden evenly across the state rather than unjustly hit citizens of the border areas. Higher gas taxes will tend to shift riders to mass transit and relieve the pressure to widen highways. The method for collection of gas taxes is already in place, and you will not need to spend one extra dime to fund a new bureaucracy.

In short, although at first glance, tolls appear to be a magical, pain-free source of revenue, once you do the analysis, they are really a wasteful and destructive method of taxation.

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